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AESTRACT

Five papers presented at a language conference are compiled in this report. They include: (1) "Le Francais au Pot-Pourri," or "Adapting the 'Open-Classroom' to the Teaching of Foreign Languages," (2) "We Can Teach Anyone to Speak French," (3) "The Use of Puppetry in the Teaching of Foreign Languages," (4) "A New Perspective for Integrated Foreign Language Study," and (5) "The Block System Calendar and Its Effect on the Teaching of Foreign Languages." (RL)

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Martin T. Barrett
McCluer High School

ED 072694

# LE FRANCAIS AU POT-POURRI

## or

## ADAPTING THE "OPEN-CLASSROOM" TO THE TEACHING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The purpose of this paper is to describe one attempt at modifying the learning environment of a Foreign Language classroom. This classroom is located at McCluer High School, a suburban high school in Florissant, Missouri; this is part of continuing research in this school district for improving language learning begun seven years ago under the title "The McCluer Plan for Foreign Language Learning". This experiment is in French; it is being conducted by the author. This paper will describe

I. The McCluer Plan-- What it is,

II. The Philosophy of the Open-Classroom and its application to Foreign Language learning,

III. The Specifics of the present experiment

IV. Some hopes-- some Fears.

## I. THE MCCLUER PLAN-- What it is:

The Foreign Language classes in the Ferguson-Florissant School District of St. Louis County, Mo. have been following a program of studeies called the McCluer Plan, named after what was in 1966 a large senior high school. The program has been used in three junior high schools starting in the seventh grade in French and Spanish, with Latin and German available after the ninth grade.

The McCluer Plan is an organization of materials and personnel stressing individualized pacing of learning, continuous progress, peer learning in small groups, discrete language skill development adaptable to students' mode of learning. It is conceived as a student-activity oriented program; student responsibility for learning is stressed.

The programs in French, Spanish and German are constructed around the Holt, Rinehard Winston Series: ECOUTER ET PARLER, PARLER ET LIRE; ENTENDER Y HABLAR, EN LAS AMERICAS; VERSTEHEN UND SPRECHEN (Revised). These are the core language materials being taught in the Ferguson-Florissant School District. There is a wide range of teacher-pupil interaction patterns in the various schools. In some cases there is much control of the pacing with more or less traditional classroom routine; in others more choice is allowed the student.

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Discrete language skill development activities adaptable to the student's mode of learning are an integral part of the McCluer Plan materials. It is the purpose of these activities to teach skills rather than just material content. Phase A of each lesson stresses audio-comprehension; Phase B, pronunciation; Phase C, the more complex skills of total communication and simple writing and reading; Phase D explains grammar concepts. The basic intent is that a student progress through these four phases in order; a student may find that he succeeds better by following a different order; for example: some students who have difficulty in assimilating new content find that doing Phase B, pronunciation, first, helps them to achieve better results in Phase A with less time involved. Likewise, Phase D, Grammar could be studies first with the other phases following. A student can also concentrate on Phase A or Phase B of a number of lessons before doing the other work in those lessons.

Evaluation is built into the materials. There is at least one "test" for each phase. The tests may be used as diagnostic or evaluative instruments, according to the student's and teacher's "educational sophistication".

In May 1972, first and second level students in French, Spanish and German (first level-- first and second year; second level-- third and fourth year) scored statistically with the National average on the Pimsleur Proficiency tests. Those students who had finished at least three-fourths of the lessons in the basic texts scored above average. The Pimsleur Tests are intended for students who have completed at least three-fourths of a basic text.

In general, English has been used by teachers and students in the Ferguson-Florissant District for communication in the classroom in running the program in the first level and in many instances in the more advanced levels.

## II. THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE OPEN-CLASSROOM--ITS APPLICATION TO FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

What is an "open-classroom?

More than anything it is an attitude,
a state of mind on the part of teacher and student
an"ambiance" , an environment intended to foster learning.

To think of open-mindedness as opposed to close-mindedness on the part of teacher and student in the mutual pursuit of common relevant goals is perhaps to be on the right track.

To have clear-cut options in achieving clear-cut goals is still on the right track.

To tear out walls, or not to build them, in order to achieve open spaces more frequently than not is on the wrong track.

To put a group of teachers or a teaching team into a classroom or group of classrooms more often than not is on the wrong track.

To allow students to do whatever they wish, whenever they wish, and however they wish is definitely on the wrong track.

To allow students the right to make mistakes in seeking solutions to their problems without penalizing them may be on the right track.

To help students learn how to learn and to aid them in the clarification of goals and objectives is on the right track.

The open-classroom is a learning environment where the student finds a storehouse of highly structured learning experiences with multiple options to suit his personal needs. It provides opportunities for independent work, socially dynamic group learning and professional guidance from the teacher. It makes use of all resources available in the community and it feeds back into the community.

How does all this apply to the Foreign Language classroom?

The Foreign Language classroom is too often a closed door learning situation. Requirements for admission and continuing are only too often subject matter oriented and in this respect almost entirely reflect the cognitive domain. A pre-determined amount of subject matter as presented in a publishers set of books controls what goes on and how much is covered. Basic skills may be developed, but more often than not content rather than skills determines success or failure.

Teacher or student options as to methods and/or content are not open. Relevance to the target culture and/or the learning-subject, the student, is often lacking. The affective domain is slighted in classroom procedures and outcomes.

Foreign Language learning in its broad sense includes more than language learning. Among other things it includes learning to understand and to accept as valid a culture and its people that differ from one's own. Humanistically, the affective objectives may be more justifiable than those referring to cognitive language skills. In fact, most teachers of Foreign Languages subjectively will agree that anyone who <u>wants</u> to participate in a foreign

culture will learn its language system.

The option of exploring and participating in a meaningful foreign cultural experience, even on a short term basis, should be open to all students. The basic requirements of most Foreign Language courses do not encourage this type of learning. Stress on four to six years continuous sequences may produce a handful of devotees, but it does not maintain nor encourage increased participation in Foreign Language learning. The open-mindedness and open-door policies of the open-classroom may be a remedy for ailing ineffectual programs.

III. SPECIFICS OF THE PRESENT EXPERIMENT

A. Physical facilities:

1. One classroom 25x40 feet equipped with tables and chairs; 8 carrels for taped materials; one overhead screen and projector; one slide projector; one filmstrip viewer; one 16 mm projector; adequate shelves for storage of materials; one chalk board; carpeted floor; no air-conditioning; 200 feet from interstate highway

2. One language laboratory-- fully equipt with individual recorders

3. One resource center containing tapes, books, magazines dictionaries and encyclopedias.

B. Personnel:

1. 100 (one hundred) students of French grouped into five sections, each section containing beginning students thru sixth year advanced students. 55% are first level (first and second year); 32% are second level (third and fourth year); 13% are third level (fifth and sixth year)

2. Staff-- one teacher; two paraprofessionals supervising language lab and resource center; native speakers in the community as available.

C. Strategies:

1. Common non-graded experiences-- All students in a section with the teacher taking part in game-simulations, simple learning games adapted from social science classes, self-concept building techniques, fantasy, value clarification activities, cooking and food preparation and enjoyment, song and dance activities, guest speakers, movies and audio-visual happenings

Some of these activities are one session affairs with minimum follow up exercises on vocabulary or affective reaction; others, as in the case of some game-simulations and simple learning games may be several weeks in length or can be repeated as desired by students and teacher at regular intervals.

One of goals of many of these common experiences is to encourage the student to research and invent similar learning activities for the class.

These common experiences are in the Foreign Language, and in some instances have different levels of participation according to ability of the student.

2. Developmental Courses-- required of all students
Each student is at some stage of development in Foreign Language skills and appreciation. Using the materials available, the McCluer Plan Ecouter et Parler, Parler et Lire and/or Programmed Reading and Writing (Burroughs) the Assco Review Series, the newly released Dialogue Africain Contemporain, Magazine articles and slides (Realités and Paris Match and Express,)and books in the resource center, to construct for each student or preferably for groups of students a program of work to develop the skills and impart the concepts necessary for continuous progress

3. Mini-Courses Optional
As need arises or interest suggests one session or several session activity for groups of students given by the teacher. These can be centered around grammar concepts, language structures, cultural items; these can be open to all students in the school, and will be in the target language or in English depending on the situation. Students will be encouraged to develop mini-courses of their own for class or group presentation.

4. Independent Study Optional
As the name implies, according to the individual student's desires and capabilities-- completely open ended as to content and purpose and method

D. Role of the Teacher:

1. Facilitator of learning-- to organize and present learning experiences to each student and to encourage and motivate according to individual needs.

2. To offer continuous opportunity to communicate in the Foreign Language. The Common Experiences are in the target language. The teacher must manipulate these activities in such a way that all students can participate

according to their abilities.

3. To offer individual help as needed in the Developmental Courses

4. Together with each student to evaluate the progress of that student

E. Time Allotments: Each section 55 minutes daily.

1. Common Experiences -- Three times a week-- usually for one session (25 minutes)

2. Developmental Courses-- Classroom group (peer learning) and lab work-- three to five sessions per week

3. Mini-Courses- - twice weekly , one session each.

IV. SOME FEARS--SOME HOPES

It is with some trepidation that the author undertakes this experiment. It is not for fear that he is on the wrong path, it is not for fear of failing due to misguided zeal. It is for fear that he cannot live up to the students' expectations and wants. He is also afraid that if others see his lack of success they may say that all these innovative ideas are a waste of time and will continue to isolate themselves more and more from the total school community. And then there is the eternal search for and preparation of new materials and learning experiences-- and that takes time.

There is much that is challenging across these United States. Successful examples of what this paper is trying to do already are in existence in California, Washington, Missouri, Minnesota, New York; the author has met the writers and organizers of these mentioned, and he is sure that many others exist . Therefore he hopes that this present effort will encourage others to do and write about what they do.

It is hoped that this experiment will be another step forward toward integrating the Foreign Language program into the total school curriculum and offer what it can to language arts, literature and rhetoric and grammar; fine arts, music, painting, sculpture, art appreciation, drama; philosophy and social studies, history, anthropology, psychology, sociology, positve self-concept develment-- in other words , the whole range of the mind and heart of MAN.

# WE CAN TEACH ANYONE TO SPEAK FRENCH

By Rita Randolph, Longview Community Coll.

Often the first thing a speaker does is to change the title of his paper from the one which is printed on the program. The reason is probably that in accepting the invitation to speak, he had to reply by return mail, which afforded him little enough time to formulate his position, much less select an appropriate title. Accordingly, I should like to change the title of this paper to: "Meditations of a Junior College Teacher Just Off Probation".

An incident from my first year in junior college teaching will serve to introduce my problem. One day, a few minutes before the second semester French class began, I showed a picture of my daughter to three students. They went back into a corner of the room, held an extended conference, then proudly said to me: "Votre fille est très jolie". It was a shock to realize that students who work hard and attend class regularly should have to confer in order to make such a simple statement in French. Of course I knew that these students were not potential French teachers. Their capabilities lay in other areas than foreign language. However they were studying French with a great deal of interest, and this little incident made me feel that the course was not meeting their needs.

It was true that the textbook which had been recommended to me was culturally oriented to the extent that students would find it much easier to say that St. Louis is on the Mississippi than to make a comment about my daughter. The main virtue of the text was considered to be its efficiency in the presentation of basic structure. It was indeed efficient. By the end of the first semester four tenses, some twenty irregular verbs, direct and indirect object pronouns, comparison of adjectives and adverbs and many other constructions were presented and at such a rate that only a linguistically talented student could master them all.

As student teachers, we all remember being warned to teach for the best students and let the mediocre students do the best they can. Clearly the text I was using had been selected with the superior student in mind, for who else would be capable of transfering his knowledge from erudite subject matter to every day situations? As a neophyte junior college teacher, I learned something else: the importance of adequately preparing the student who might transfer to a senior college in the middle of the year. It was imperative to have covered at least as much

material as they cover in the first semester senior college class. In this last matter, the pride of the junior college in the quality of its instruction figured as much as the welfare and convenience of the students in question. Considering the complete freedom which textbook writers seem to have in selecting first and second semester objectives, it is a wonder to me that students who transfer ever do survive. It was this point which prevented me from changing my text for two years, although I recognized very soon that it was too difficult for my students.

In the past, we could assume that if a student was capable of reaching college, he knew how to analyze his native language and was thus prepared to learn a foreign language with ease. We know that this is not true today. Senior college teachers have been complaining for years about the inability of students to write in English. In the junior college, our open door policy is as good as a guarantee that students will often be linguistically handicapped. My question is: In the light of a changed student body, must we continue to teach as if only the superior students matter in the long run? When students sign up for our courses because they want to travel or learn to communicate with foreign relatives, must the pace and material selected be suitable for the best students only? Must a textbook which an average foreign language student could appreciate necessarily be inadequate to the needs of an excellent student? And finally, are we foreign language teachers incapable of realizing that if we are going to have students to teach at all, we are going to have to place success within the reach of the average student who is willing to work?

It might be appropriate here to examine some of the so-called weaknesses of the average non-linguistically talented student. To begin with, such a student does not know what language consists of. He does not know what makes a thought complete. He does not know a noun from a verb. The tenses of verbs are anathema to him. He views the foreign language as a word for word translation of his own language, which explains why few French students ever master the usage of such expressions as "venir de faire quelque chose". He cannot grasp the idea that to have done something is a linguistic entity worthy of its own expression in French. He seems incapable of accepting the idea that French and Spanish speakers use the verb "to have" in expressions of age. To him it may be stupid. He will reject the idea and refuse to learn it.

Memorized dialogues have fallen into disfavor not because they are bad in themselves, but because we teachers have failed to teach students to adapt each line of memorized dialogue to meet specific needs. This is not an easy task with many students who see no relationship between:"The book is on the table" and "The book is under the chair." Worse yet, I have had students reject the very idea of mimicking and following a model because in English classes, they are encouraged to be original, creative. "So why not in French class?" I am referring to the type of student who answers "d'accord" when asked: "Comment allez-vous? " on the grounds that "d'accord" means OK, doesn't it? And why do we always have to give the memorized answer?"

Withal, the worst student will learn certain things in a foreign language which meet his needs or capture his fancy. All of us have at one time or another met the laziest student we ever had only to hear him sound forth loudly in the one thing which he remembers about the [illegible] course, giving us (and the world) the impression that after all, maybe our efforts were not entirely in vain.

For three years, I have had the uneasy feeling that most of my hard-working average students learned a great deal of French, but that neither they nor I knew exactly what in French they had learned. For two years, I have been looking for a text which would be effective for the average as well as the excellent student.

At the AATF Convention in New Orleans, I heard Karl S. Pond speak about the language laboratory. He mentioned three things which impressed me greatly: 1. that in his opinion, foreign language departments should go out of the laboratory business and leave the equipment to the resource center; 2. that students should thoroughly master overnight all materials presented in class and should be tested on them the following day; 3. that students should have control of the source of the lesson material. For this he recommended small cassette tape recorders which students could check out of the library. He also added that he gives only three grades: A if the student's performance equals the teacher's; B if the material is well learned but slightly inferior to the teacher's; and F for failure to master the material. As he talked, Mr.

Pond referred to a new French textbook which he had just published containing lively dialogues, short enough to be mastered overnight. This idea attracted me for my "average" students because I was beginning to realize that memorized lines are often useful without too much adaptation if they are geared to student needs in the first place.

On examining Pond's text: French by Degrees [1], I found a startling thing: no verb is formally introduced before the fourteenth lesson. The first thirteen lessons are devoted to the formation of good pronunciation habits and to the French noun and its modifiers. The third person singular and plural forms of the verbs "avoir" and "etre" are used to make simple sentences like: "Votre fille est tres jolie." This postponement of detailed verb study should prove helpful to the non-talent student who would normally experience enough difficulty at the beginning of the course in learning to handle the masculine and feminine gender of nouns and adjectives- a concept so very foreign to English. There are grammar explanations for the students who can profit from them, but for all there are pattern drills to be mastered overnight. Thus anyone who is willing to study can learn to speak correct French and know exactly what he is saying because the drills are translated. Pond insists that students know what it is they are learning. Furthermore, since both dialogues and drills are short, the author believes that the whole class can be tested in the average period. Finally, there are self-tests arranged in programmed style for immediate reinforcement.

Speaking of tests, I must admit that the first French students I ever had told me that I did not know how to make a test which they could pass. How right they were! My test items generally require two or three transformations for one answer. I realize now that such questions are too difficult for the non-talent student. He can recall something he has memorized, or perform one transformation such as from singular to plural, or masculine to feminine. But to require more than one transformation per answer is to reduce his chances of success significantly. Pond's approach to foreign language learning is complete mastery of a limited amount of material. In classroom practice sessions, in real life situations, or when being tested, it should be a pleasure for students to recall

[1] Pond, Karl S., French by Degrees, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc. 1970).

their well-learned French.

I would like to conclude this paper with another illustrative incident, this time from my own school days in New York State. Having read in the State College catalogue that students who took college mathematics in high school would be excused from taking it in college, I immediately sought permission to take senior math in high school. Since I was not a very good student in math, I had to work very hard. My teacher taught me. I was her dull student. I never could do the home assignments in our text, and I always felt that the C's which I received on my report card represented my teacher's appreciation of my diligence more than anything else. However I scored 97 on the final state examination in Advanced Algebra, a fact which nobody was able to understand.

Years later, when the mathematics teachers in our Kansas City School System were selecting new texts, I realized that I had been a B level student in an A level math class. My classmates were potential engineers. The problems in their text were pre-engineering problems-too difficult for me. Had I been in a class where the text used merely presented the basic principals of algebra, and exercises just difficult enough to test mastery of those principals (as did the state examination), I would have experienced less frustration and more day to day success. I was a minority in that pre-engineering class. I could not expect to have the majority use a text suited for me.

In our beginning foreign language classes, I believe that the linguistically talented students are in the minority. There are people in all walks of life who hate foreign languages because in those required courses they were stretched to fit textbooks written for the best minds in the field. It would seem to be far simpler, and more humane to choose a text suited to the non-talented majority and provide supplementary material if necessary for the promising minority. The study of foreign languages need not be too difficult for everyone but a select few. I believe that we can teach anyone to speak French, but we must choose the right text.

Rita K. Randolph
Instructor in
French and Spanish

Longview Com. Col.
Lee's Summit, Mo.

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# The Use of Puppetry in the Teaching of Foreign Languages

By Jacques C. Chicoineau, Webster College

In our days, when somebody talks about 'puppets', 'puppetry' or 'marionettes', most of the time one sees immediately a group of young children, seated on the floor of a nursery school, or at a birthday party, watching some kind of Punch and Judy play. It is indeed unfortunate to see that puppetry, which was for centuries an entertainment for adults, is now, for many people, merely "kids' stuff".

Puppetry is more than that. It is a form of dramatic art, which cannot only attract the most sophisticated audiences, but also fascinate the greatest minds. In the past, musicians such as Lully, Gluck, Mozart, Haydn, Bizet, Chopin and Liszt who improvised on the piano during the performances given by George Sand, painters like Delacroix, Paul Klee, writers like Lesage, Goethe, who found the idea of his Faust while watching a puppet show, George Bernard Shaw, Anatole France, were patrons of this art. It is also one of the oldest form of dramatic expression (if not THE oldest). But it is even more than that, and here we have the reason of this communication; it is in addition, a magnificent tool for us, as teachers, and especially teachers of Foreign languages, for it is "par excellence" an audio visual device, the most versatile, the most flexible, and the most portable, as it can be reduced to one or two puppets in the hands of the instructor. Puppetry can be used in a wide range of situations in the classroom. Not only can it help us to teach, but it can as well be of a great help for the student who has to overcome inhibitions such as bashfulness, timidity and fear to express himself in front of the class.

Is the idea of using puppetry in the classroom so revolutionary? No, indeed! We are now living at the age of the audio-visual. Audio-visual teaching, but also audio-visual entertainment, audio-visual political or religious indoctrination are our share. We are surrounded with tape-recorders, slide projectors, movies, video-tapes, and above all, television sets. It is obvious that our students, conditioned as they are by audio-visual gimmicks, would accept more than the students of previous generations, a teaching using puppetry, which is, as we will show later, the oldest audio-visual device used by mankind. The television producers are aware of this ability to cope with puppetry. Puppets play a large part in many educational programs. Last Spring, on the C.B.S. morning news, Punch and Judy were discussing the events of the day, and I was delighted once, by a fascinating presentation of the problem of the S.A.L.T. discussions, which was conducted by these two famous and ill-behaving characters with their conventional gestures and voices. Needless to mention, the success of Sesame Street and the 'Muppets'.

In these conditions, why don't we use puppets in our classes? In the early times of humanity, when the great mass of the people was illiterate, those in charge of teaching the concepts and mysteries of religion were relying on their eloquence, of course, and it was the "audio" side of their teaching, but also were showing, one way or another, what they were talking

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about, and it was the "visual" part. It is true of the Egyptians as well as of the priests of the early Christian church. Then, to explain and to show at the same time was, as it is now, one of the best ways to make the people understand ... hence the sculptures, hence the stained glass windows of our cathedrals, hence the 'tropes' performed at the foot of the altar, hence the puppet plays.

As you know, the word 'marionette' comes from the Middle-French 'maryonette', from Marion, diminutive of Marie, the virgin Mary being one of the main characters who appeared in the mystery plays performed in the church on puppet stages.

Roland Sylwester, author of the interesting book The Puppet in the Church tells us that "During the Middle Ages, puppetry became an important means of the Christian Church in Europe in the presentation of Bible stories to illiterate laity ..." and he adds: "So puppetry seems to have been born out of a need for man to illustrate, to dramatize, to influence, to communicate his religious ideas to others."(1) Illustrate, dramatize, communicate and even influence (why not?) ... isn't that what we are trying to do every day in our classrooms? Isn't that, after all, what teaching is all about?

Then came the Great Gutenberg and his invention of the printing press with mobile types. For centuries the book became the cornerstone of the teaching-learning process. Now the great discoveries in the field of electronics brought what I dare to call the 'Renaissance' of the audio-visual. Why don't we use puppets in our classes?

* * * * * *

In fact, puppets are already used today, in many schools, in Art, in Drama, and, of course, in Language classes (English classes as well as Foreign Languages'). They are also used with great effectiveness in some special institutions as a therapeutic device for speech or hearing defects or for disturbed behavior.

I, myself, use puppets in some of my classes, and I would like to share with you some of my thoughts and some of my experiences on that matter.

The way I developed, what I don't dare to call a 'method' was rather empiric. Maybe, if I explain what I did and what I am doing, it will give you some ideas which you will be able to develop at your turn according to your needs.

I owe the idea of using puppetry in my classes to Professor Elizabeth Ratté, who was, during the 60's, Chairman of the French Department of my college. Miss Ratté used puppets in her teaching at the FLES level in our experimental school. Before coming to St. Louis, she had been one of the consultants who prepared the series Parlons Français, in

(1) The Puppetry Journal, publication of the Puppeteers of America, volume 23, number 4, January-February 1972, pages 3 and 4

which Mrs. Anne Slack used puppets along with living characters. (Parenthetically I would like to point out that, from now on, when I will use the word 'puppet', I will mean exclusively "hand puppet", the only sort of puppets which can be used in our classes, because of the simplicity of their manipulation, and because of the possibility, for one operator alone, to handle two puppets at the same time and to present a dialogue. The other sorts of puppets; marionettes, rod and shadow puppets belong to the entertainment business, not to the field of education.)

Before entering in more details, I should give you the two general principles which guide me in my work with puppets.

The first principle is that the learning of a Foreign language should not necessarily be a boring experience. Too often, unfortunately, it happens to be so. I don't think that it is forbidden to present a subject, however difficult, in a lively and attractive manner. But, on the other hand, it is precisely because we should avoid boredom at any rate, that I would recommend a cautious use of puppets. Do not use them every day in every class!

Our teaching should not be a mere routine, we may use new tools, but with moderation. The most important thing being, as always, to use our creativity and imagination.

The second 'principle' or idea, if you want, is that puppets can be of great help to overcome the timidity shown by most of the students having to deal with a Foreign language. It is a terrible experience for most of our youngsters, boys and girls as well, to have to express themselves in front of the class, when they are conscious of their mistakes and when pitiless eyes are fixed on them.

Every family remembers the little girl (or the little boy) who, when asked to sing for mommy's birthday, was willing to do so, providing that she would be allowed to hide herself behind a door or under the huge family table? A plain sheet of cardboard, a piece of cloth or a blanket nailed across a door frame, an overturned table, will represent for our students what the door or the table represented for the little girl. The student, hidden behind your 'puppet stage' will be free to express himself in the foreign tongue, without risking the ironical or scoffing faces of his classmates.

In the use of puppets in a classroom, you will have two possible situations. Either the direct use of the puppets, by the teacher and by the students in front of the class, or the use of a stage, the young performers being hidden and presenting a real puppet show, simple as it may be.

* * * * * *

How can it be done, for example, at the grade school level? The few ideas I will submit to you are, in no way, limitative, but will rather

give you a starting point. In my examples I will use French, because it is the language I teach, but it is obvious that any other language may be used the same way.

The basic motions of the body, by which the supposed feelings or state of mind of the puppet are translated, can be easily grasped after a few periods of practice in front of a mirror. Affirmation and negation by motion of the head from top to bottom or from left to right, shyness shown by bowing the head while the two hands are raised against the cheeks, and so on, you will use your imagination and become an expert rapidly!

Puppets can be used for the presentation and teaching of basic phrases. Let's take, for example, a lesson for beginners, devoted to the teaching of greetings and introductions.

The instructor faces the class, having a puppet at his right hand. The puppet bows, and the instructor, modifying his voice, but being careful to speak, in a clear and distinct manner, says:

-Bonjour Monsieur.

The answer comes with the normal voice of the instructor:

-Bonjour Monsieur Jojo.

It is important, at the very beginning, to give the puppet, with the concensus of the class, a proper identification which will create a person, a friend. This character will be known and when the instructor has any problem, Monsieur Jojo, or whatever name was chosen, will intervene and help. He will be part of the class ...

After greeting the teacher, the puppet will face the class, bow in front of each student, at random, giving each of them a French name.

The following step will be to pass the puppet from one student to another, and to let them repeat the sentences or phrases with the most interaction possible. Slowly, but progressively, the dialogue can go on, with introduction of new structures or concepts.

-Bonjour Marie, je suis Monsieur Jojo.
-Bonjour Monsieur Jojo.
-Je suis Monsieur Jojo, tu es Marie.
-Tu es Monsieur Jojo, Je suis Marie ...

Thanks to gestures and mimicry, the verbe "etre" can be taught. The above dialogue is, of course, only a sample of what can be done. The presentation should be a lot slower and divided in shorter sequences. Puppetry can be very useful too, when you have to teach things absolutely foreign to the mind of the students. Let's take the example of the genders of adjectives, so difficult to understand for a native English speaking child.

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For this problem, you prepare and present simple and basic dialogues, using two puppets, one male and one female charcter. Unconsciously the students will associate the pronunciation of the adjectives to the sex of the puppet. The presentation of the dialogue should be associated with the proper mimicry: if the instructor says the word 'grand', he should raise his arm not only high but very high. He lowers it, if he says 'petit'. Never be afraid to overemphasize your gestures with puppets.

A sample of dialogue in this teaching could be as follows:
-Bonjour Monsieur Jojo, que tu es petit!
-Je suis petit? Tu es petite!
-Non, je suis grande, je ne suis pas petite!
-Tu es petite, je suis grand!

The argument may go on with introduction of adjectives of which pronunciation is different: gentil, gentille, laid, laide, beau, belle, etc. The above dialogue which was not prepared with any special goal in mind is just an example of the way the material should be presented. The adjectives used above were chosen in order to show the contrast between the pronunciation of masculine and feminine, contrast which should be underlined, the students being use to our invariable English adjectives.

In the two examples above, the puppets were handled by the instructor and then by the students, in front of the class, without any stage or scenery.

Another way to use puppetry consists of having short dialogues memorized by the students and presented to the class on a simple puppet stage. Then the students are really 'performing' without all the inhibitions I listed above. The dialogues can be part of those found in methods such as 'Bonjour Line' or 'Voix et Images de France', etc.

Some short French songs can also be presented this way. I prepared for example, a puppet stage adaptation of Frère Jacques, using the basic questions: "Dormez-vous?" "Sonnez-vous les matines?" etc., etc. Forgive my tendency to write etc., etc., but as I said before, my purpose in this paper is to give you some basic starting points. It is up to you to use them and to go on.

What can we do with puppetry if we are dealing with older students? In high school or even college, we cannot present basic dialogues, with a childish overtone, to sophisticated students! We have to adapt ourselves to the intellectual level of the class. But here again, puppets can be a useful tool.

We can use them in conversation classes. Here briefly explained, is the "method" I use:

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The instructor brings several puppets into the class. The students select two or three of them. Then the class discusses and decides the general line of the play which will be presented. This plot and some details are written on the board. For example, the three characters selected are: a young girl, a young boy and an old lady. The plot becomes: a girl wants to have a date with a boy. Her mother doesn't like the boy because she thinks he drinks too much ... The boy comes to take the girl, talks to the mother, and ... Here some suspense is managed ... the students chosen to play the roles being free to end at their convenience.

When this preparatory work is done, the students of the first team go behind the stage and improvise the dialogue, according to the directions written on the board. It is the very same principle as the old Italian Commedia Delle Arte! The entire dialogue is recorded simultaneously on tape. When the play is ended, the tape is played back, the teacher discussing and correcting the mistakes with the class. It is done this way in order to let the improvisation continue without interruption, for interruptions would break the work of the imagination of the students.

Last but not least, the puppets can be used in a literature class, for illustration of texts such as short plays, tales, fables, short stories, etc.

If you teach, for example, the Medieval theater, you can stage farces: Pathelin, le Cuvier, etc.

I should admit that the staging of plays or tales is going far beyond the simple use of puppetry in class. I indicated that, just to show you that there are no limits to what can be done with puppets in school.

Some of the readers may think: "Fine, but how can I get some puppets?" You will find puppets in some department stores. Companies specialized in the selling of supplies for schools offer puppets. You can also make puppets yourself, or have them made by your students. It can be an excellent extra-curricular activity of your language club.

A last thought before I conclude. It is obvious that a teacher who decides to use puppets in his class should be well prepared. However, puppets allow some possibilities of flexibility which the conventional audio-visual appraches do not. An unforeseen problem, a point, difficult to explain, may arise unexpectedly. With some practice in the use of puppets and a vivid imagination you will be able to handle the situation and overcome the problem.

* * * * *

Using puppetry in your classroom can be a great asset in your teaching of a foreign language. The few ideas I shared with you should be, once again, only a starting point. My goal was to try to open some doors, some paths. You should now explore them by yourselves. A very efficient tool is within -- will you seize it?

Frans Amelinckx
Univ. of Nebraska

# A New Perspective for Integrated Foreign Language Study

It is generally recognized that intensive language programs, ranging from increased contact hours to the total immersion concept, stimulate and greatly increase the acquisition and retention of language skills. The ideal setting and method as exemplified by the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) or the Civilian Affairs Training School (CATS) have proven effective in the intensive teaching of language skills to a selected group in a controlled situation. The features of the intensive programs are quite simple: large numbers of contact hours, small classes of extremely motivated students, an emphasis on the oral and structural aspects of the language and concentration on only one subject.

Though highly desirable, this method has had little success in its implementation in an academic setting: the college student, however motivated, has his attention drawn to too many other subjects; the exigencies of the curriculum make it rather difficult if not impossible to have an intensive program modeled after the Army Language Schools.

The only alternative has been the intensive summer programs. These fall under three categories: the day house or summer camp geared to the high school student, the language house at the college level, and the language institute geared to postgraduates, mainly high school language teachers. These programs aim at being substitutes for a trip abroad for students unable to go to a foreign country for family or financial reasons. If not as glamorous as studies abroad, the intensive summer programs at least offer for a low cost an excellent opportunity for foreign language study.

In this paper I will consider only two of the summer programs afore mentioned: the language house and the postgraduate program.

For the last two years, the University of Nebraska has had intensive summer programs in both French and German. Since I am a professor of French, I will limit my discussion to that program, although the two are similar. As it is actually set up, the program offers the students the possibility of completing the language requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences in one summer session (6 credit hours in 5½ weeks) taking the equivalent of Intermediate French under conditions providing a total immersion in the language. Students and staff live, work, eat and participate in recreational activities together in an effort to make the French House a total life-learning experience. The goal of the program is to increase competence in the students' language skills by engaging them in a day-to-day experience of living language with no formal division between language instruction and the total program of activities.

The activities on the one hand, include language instruction, using the same textbooks and material as are used in all second year French instruction at the University, with a special emphasis on the spoken aspect of the language. A special course in phonetics and pronunciation at an elementary level is included in the program. The purpose of this course is to give the students the means of avoiding mistakes before they occur and speaking as well as possible. Since language is primarily a system of sounds, it is felt that the students should be made aware of the differences between English and French phonetics and shown what they have to do to arrive at a correct French pronunciation. The students' progress in spoken French both in the classroom and the daily living situations is carefully noted by the staff. Any particular problems that certain students might have are worked out with the phonetics director.

On the other hand, the recreational activities serve as natural bases for language learning situations and for the acquisition of a functional vocabulary of daily communication: swimming, canoeing, picnicking being included in the program. In the evening or during free time opportunities are given for playing chess, checkers or Scrabble in French. The evening program may include the showing of short documentaries on French life and civilization, feature films, or a program of poetry or French music; the students are encouraged toward the end of the session to present dramatic skits in French. French newspapers and magazines are always available for reading material. A short newsletter presenting the news in French is published daily by the students under the supervision of a staff member.

From the point of view of staffing the French House is under the direction of a master teacher helped by several staff members and teachers' aides. All the staff members are natives or persons with near-native proficiency. All the staff are required to live in the French House or to be present until all scheduled activities are over (usually at about nine o'clock.)

The aim of the program is to lead the students to the acquisition of "liberated expression." One of the assumptions made was that through constant and prolonged daily use of the language, the students would absorb vocabulary, grammatical and idiomatic patterns most frequent in the French language. Although no formal course in culture or civilization was planned, the students in the French House became cognizant of the deep cultural aspects of the language and more aware of the cultural differences existing between the daily life in the Midwest and the French daily life, even if it was a simulated one.

No formal measurements were made between the achievements of the students participating in the French House and the students in the regular academic programs: however, visiting staff members could really note a marked fluency in the oral and verbal expression of the French House students. They were freer to express their ideas and to participate in fruitful and meaningful discussions.

The other aspect of intensive language programs is the one dealing with postgraduates: the summer institute offered mainly under the auspices of NDEA. The purpose of these institutes was to train or retrain high school teachers already in the field. As Edward D. Allen points out in his article "The Education and Re-Education of Foreign Language Teachers," (MLJ, XLVIII, n° 5, May, 1964) one of the objectives if not the main one was remedial, upgrading the low level of proficiency in speaking and listening comprehension. It seems that a substantial number of foreign language teachers at the secondary level are ill prepared in the language skills. In his book, Teaching Foreign Languages (Harper & Row, 1969), Frank M. Grittner writes that "it appears safe to assume that a rather large proportion of the nation's foreign language teachers are not very proficient in the languages they are called upon to teach."

Several studies deal with this problem and blame the college and university language departments for deficient or irrelevent teacher preparation, or the lack of coordination and communication between secondary and higher education. Often the result is a piecemeal or fragmented approach to language teaching. Many reports and articles published in the professional journals plead for a close cooperation among the foreign language teachers from FLES to graduate school.

In view of these needs and problems, I would like to suggest a program which is at present tentative: the combination of intensive language programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels into a single unified whole; i.e., combining the Summer House and the Teachers' Workshop. This would fulfil the demand made by the Nebraska Advisory Council in the Teaching of Foreign Languages which states: "that the teacher training institutions take steps to provide some means for teachers who are already in the field and who are deficient in the competencies ... to upgrade these competencies. This would involve offering courses, summer institutes and workshops aimed specifically at the needs of the teacher ..." (Needs in the Training of Teachers, A Report of Task Force II of the Nebraska TTT Project.)

The advantages of combining the two intensive language programs are obvious: the setting of the French House provides a ready-made atmosphere where the foreign language is spoken, the activities are already geared toward providing a functional vocabulary related to the students' interest, the staff basically can be the same, the teacher aides function could be filled by the participants in the workshop, providing them with a scholarship; the basic rental of films and other expenses would remain the same if the Language House and the workshop were combined into one unit. In short, all the social and recreational activities with minor adjustments would greatly benefit the workshop participants.

As far as the instructional program for the workshop participants is concerned the emphasis would be on maintaining and increasing their language skills, broadening their knowledge in the area of culture and civilization, and integrating the various aspects into a unified whole which would be put into practice with mini-lessons and interaction in the Language House.

In the area of language skills, the staff teacher would conduct a class in advanced phonetics. At first, the stress would be on corrective phonetics, then on comparative phonetics with the workshop participants presenting to the elementary phonetics class a mini-lesson under the supervision of the master teacher. The mini-teaching would consist of fifteen or twenty minute segments of material related to the elementary phonetics class. The master teacher would observe the teaching and take notes related to the workshop participant in two areas: his command of the language and his methodology.

In addition to phonetics, the workshop participant would be expected to take a class in the syntactic structures of the language, exposing him to the latest linguistic theories. This class could be combined with a seminar discussing the approaches applicable to language teaching. Individual experiences could be discussed and a meaningful dialogue established between the high school and university teachers on some of the problems involved. The staff would work along with the workshop participants in the preparation of material for the mini-lessons in second-year French. This type of coordination would help in eliminating one of the areas of weakness: the deficiency of some teachers in the ability to explain and demonstrate the role syntax plays in verbal communication.

The other area of interest would be the study of the cultural aspects of a language. The purpose of the culture course would be to teach authentic language patterns in the context of normal cultural situations, stressing the different languages, since languages reflect the culture both through their vocabulary and through their structures. The emphasis in this course would be on deep culture, taking in consideration the distinction made by Nelson Brooks between formal and deep culture. Generally, formal culture (the artistic and intellectual achievements of a country) is taught in civilization courses and is fairly well known by the teacher. Deep culture (the subtleties of interpersonal relationships expressed in deeds and words) is less known, unless the teacher has had the benefit of a lengthy stay abroad. The modern concept of culture is an attempt to lead the student into a better understanding of the daily life of a people and how they cope with the problems of ordinary day-to-day existence. Here again the learning process would not operate in a vacuum but be related to the daily life of the French House and the interpersonal relationships evolving from it.

The operation of a teacher workshop in conjunction with the language house would greatly help in the instructional process since it would place the workshop in a realistic classroom situation with students who need the instruction. It would enhance the maintaining and acquisition of a functional vocabulary. It would permit the interaction of university students with high school teachers and the sharing of teaching experiences.

This kind of program would aid the creating of meaningful communication between the college and high school teachers. The high school teachers would benefit from the language expertise of the university staff and in turn the staff would become more cognizant of the problems, the needs, and the difficulties of the language teachers in high schools.

The workshop program could be incorporated into a credit system leading to the obtention of a Master of Arts in Teaching which would be useful for the high school language teachers.

I am hopeful that this kind of integrated approach to intensive language study would become a cooperative effort aimed at improving the language programs both at the secondary and higher education levels and would give a new perspective toward language teaching.

# THE BLOCK SYSTEM CALENDAR AND ITS EFFECT ON THE TEACHING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

By F. Rand Morton, Colorado College

ANOTHER DECADE HENCE, when it will be better possible to evaluate that of 1965-75, which we are now beginning to end, it should be interesting to attempt to discover if the myriads of changes Education has been asked to make, and has made, during this time, have finally affected more the content of what has been learned or the means by which the learning has been accomplished. I want to report one change which has, I believe, influenced almost equally both the content and means--particularly with reference to what we normally consider elementary foreign language learning on the college level.

The change I report here is called the "block plan" or "block calendar" used presently at my institution, The Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Officially, it is termed "The Colorado College Plan", but students and professors alike use the more immediately descriptive name of "block" when referring to it. At first glance the "block plan" does appear to be a purely mechanical change--one of calendar alone. What has been done, on this most obvious level, is to take the nine months that normally constitute a traditional two-semester academic year, divide them into nine almost equal "blocks" of from fifteen to seventeen and one half class days each, to permit four and one half days to intervene between each otherwise contiguous block, and, typically, to offer the student the opportunity to study, during that short period, one thing only as part of one small group under the supervision of a sole instructor. If at the end of the block the student's work is satisfactory to the instructor, he may receive an evaluative grade and the equivalent of 3 1/4 normal semester credit hours, nine of which may be earned in a single academic year.

The educational philosophy, together with more pragmatic objectives held by the College faculty, which have informed and formed the "Colorado College Plan" are, in my opinion, of tremendous significance to American education in general--but there is no time to examine them here. Briefly, however, this is what must be known of its "practical operation" to understand its implication for, and influence on, language instruction.

First: during each block period, between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, the typical student--all elementary language students--are committed to one instructor and one academic discipline with no other limitations--including even those of location, of instruction and, to some degree, special costs. After 3 p.m. the average student is free to do other things--in some cases for additional but minimal academic credit--and always with the understanding that this "adjunct work" not jeopardize his ability to be prepared for his full time block work the following morning. Most classes are limited to maximums of fifteen or twenty-five. Elementary language classes rarely exceed twenty. There is no daily schedule, as such. Instructors may require total and continuous student participation from eight to three on one or more days, or none at all on others. When class groups leave campus, they are committed to their instructor, technically speaking, around the clock. But, both on and off campus, instructors most often let students make the decisions of what they will do, and how. In a word, the usual limitations, and interferences to college level academic pursuits have, for the most part, been removed. Those limitations that remain seem appropriate: they are simply what the instructor wants the students to do...and what, for the most part, the students also want to do.

There is one other limitation which, at least theoretically, should not exist but which in practice, does most certainly for many disciplines. It is an expectational one: the "amount" to be learned..or, reduced to its classical formulation, the "material to be covered". Much, if not most, of the educational justification for the "block plan" is its ability to insure a far deeper learning experience by each student in whatever discipline is studied---and this it unquestionably accomplishes. But "coverage" in the conventional sense is difficult to forget--particularly in disciplines like foreign languages, and many of us continue to accept it as a inescapable limiting factor. Since the block provides the student with 3 1/4 normal semester hour credits it is reasonable to expect that in one block's work the equivalent of slightly more than one normal semester's material be

covered. Theoretically then, we should "cover" the first two years of college level French or Spanish in four blocks--or 14 class weeks--or a total absolute maximum of 420 potential contact hours. Before I suggest how this is--or perhaps better, is not being done--and what we have discovered in trying to do it, let me call attention to four other specific problems in the field of language learning that language instruction under the block system has made us face, squarely perhaps for the first time.

The most significant difference between learning (--anything--) under the block and learning under almost any other type of academic progression is, in the case of the first, the apparent and relatively complete lack of what might be called "fallow time"--that purely temporal period that separates each instance of problem confrontation (i.e. class) from the next. This kind of time during which, according to the current popular theory of psycho-cybernetics "the mind does it own thinking" and which is most abundant within the normal context of college level study, seems non-existent to any practical degree for the student of the block system. It was the lack of this "soaking up", "subconscious mulling", "mental cud-chewing" period that had given us, perhaps, most concern for the success of language learning under the block system. Would the time during afternoon and evening spent on other things than language be enough? Would sleeping time be regularly useful in this respect? And if not, how much of the intricacy of language functioning could be mastered without it?

Perhaps a part of the same problem is a second question: How much exposure to language training can the average student tolerate on a daily basis? Some experimentation and experience along this line was available to us, but not enough with reference to the typical, general, college-wide language student. (Simultaneously, our colleagues in the English department were wondering how many hours a day could one profitably read poetry.) Here again we will have some interesting first facts to ponder.

A third, related and very practical question: How much of that learned so quickly and intensively would remain in the verbal repertoire of our students, both during the block, and, of course, after it? Since much of what we must call learning in spoken language acquisition is the formation of new habits, this question quite simply becomes: can useful language habits be formed under the contingencies of time and intensity inherent in the block system? The question implies a comparative approach, of course. Can language habits be made as well under the block system as under the non-block system? Or, perhaps, better?

Finally, and perhaps most obviously, the question of the role of sequentiality--recently the subject for research and discussion by several linguists--in effective language learning. The block system, almost tautologically must encourage interruptions in what is commonly termed "academic progression", or sequentiality, within one, or more disciplines. What would happen to language skills which could not be maintained between separate learning blocks? It seemed at first that we might be faced with the equivalent of teaching a foreign language during a school year interrupted by five summers.

These questions, basic to the practicality of language learning, had, of course, to remain answerless until the block system was placed in operation, as it was just two years ago this past September. In spite of the uneasiness that risk-taking often seems to elicit in the college professor, most of the language instructors at Colorado College who were to be involved in elementary languages were--and are still, I believe--among the more enthusiastic supporters of the plan. The excitement and challenge of being given students devoted entirely to the effort of mastering a new language, of being able to take them with us to France, Germany or Mexico (as indeed we have) the opportunity for trying the newer total immersion techniques that are only possible when a student studies only language, seemed both then, as they do now, far more promising than our doubts and ignorance could make us fearful.

Let me describe briefly what happens in what we call elementary language instruction under the Colorado College Plan. Although all languages have had to face the same problems already mentioned, each has responded in a different manner, and henceforth I shall speak primarily of the area I know best: Spanish. I shall however try to indicate, where appropriate, those areas in which the several language instructional programs have either most, or least in common, and the practical results of these differences when such are significant.

The first, and perhaps most obvious difference between language learning--and teaching--at Colorado College and elsewhere for the moment is certainly the amount of time spent daily by both students and teachers. If approximately a week's normal work is to be done in a single day, how, you might ask first, does an instructor of first year college Spanish or French or German survive five hours of drill and recitation daily--no matter how small the class? And how, too, does the student...? We don't know, for as yet we have not tried it. For French and Spanish, at least, we have used programmed learning materials for the most part which has freed the instructor from most types of repetitive drill work while requiring, particularly in the case of Spanish--that much of his "teaching time" be spent with individual students, diagnosing individual problems and prescribing solutions to students' linguistic problems as they arise. Since the spoken language is that receiving most emphasis, a majority of these problems involve the formation of correct phonomorphological habits. Since this is best done on a consultative basis, requests for which normally originate with the student, it has seemed (in my own case) best handled during two short periods--one in the morning and one in the afternoon--both together being roughly equivalent in time to the daily "office hour" that most of us give during a normal semester. The difference between the two is however great. The office hour (again in my own case) seemed ideal to do the teacher's usual clerical work with few student interruptions, whereas during the two short consultative periods there is a great deal to be done for individual students. Indeed, for the instructor it may be the hardest hour worked each day. Not only are there problems to be solved, advice to be given, review to be recommended and encouragement to be offered, but there is a student-teacher relationship which, under the block plan can often be a very strong and beneficial one. This hour each day never seems long enough.

Another portion of the instructor's time, for Spanish, is regularly devoted to what are termed "check points"--periods of between fifteen to twenty minutes' length during which students in groups of two, three or, at the most four, are engaged in active demonstration of their oral abilities learned on a daily basis with the program. In my case, rarely do I give more than a total of one hour and a half to this particular aspect of semi-individual oral practice. Nor is it necessary. Since all students in any one check point group are at precisely the same point in the basic program, and since each has approximately the same oral skills, vocabulary and reading experience, these short meetings can be highly efficently managed with respect to maximum student participation. Typically, time flies and there is excitement and tension.

A third easily identifiable daily portion of instructional time is the lecture or 'special topic'period. For many courses these are the only periods at which all students enrolled in a single language course may find themselves together in the same room, doing the same thing at the same time. These periods last approximately 40 minutes in my Spanish sections. During them we discuss aspects of Spanish or Hispanic American history or culture, see movies or film strips, listen to records or invited gueses--while using Spanish to the maximum degree possible. On Fridays we also manage to eat or drink something that a native of Spain or Hispanic America might qualify as "pretty authentic", and which often is concocted by group effort. When we are giving the course in Mexico, as I have twice, this period, of course, is less useful.

The consultative-problem solving periods, together with those of the check points

and lectures accounts for approximately three hours of the instructor's time daily. Note that none of this time is given over to the kinds of activities traditionally associated with the language classroom. Some of us, however, and in some courses, have also found it useful to establish yet a fourth period, (student attendance at which is often optional) to simply talk about the target language and compare its functioning with English. This sometimes resembles the "grammatical explanation" of the classroom, but more often it reminds me of an undergraduate pro-seminar in descriptive linguistics. This period is normally conducted in English for first and second block students, in both English and Spanish for third and fourth. Fifth block all. There is yet one more time period which brings students and instructor together--but, as usual, again on a one-to-one basis. In addition to the program work assigned, students must also undertake a special, individual project involving some phase of Spanish or Latin American civilization or (less frequently the case) the learning of additional, rather specialized skills in Spanish through the use of mini-programs. Students must make one or more appointments with the instructor to report on project progress and be evaluated at the conclusion of the project work. These meetings occur most frequently toward the end of the block. They add perhaps an extra hour of instructor's time for each student in the course--an average equivalent of 45 minutes more each day. Thus, the language instructor under the block plan, using programmed materials, may be in contact with one or more students some four to five hours daily--precisely the number of hours he would spend in class during a week on the semester calendar. Making out and correcting daily exams, preparing special materials, organizing the lecture periods probably adds another two to three hours to his professional day. If nothing else, the block plan has finally made the elementary level college language teacher work a respectable 35 to 40 hour week. And, perhaps more important, that this work exploit for the first time his own professional skills and training.

What does the student do? It depends greatly on him. If he wishes he can work even harder than the instructor. If he is not so eager, he may work somewhat less--an average of perhaps five and three-quarters hours daily--but without fail. The work periods for the less assiduous student might look something like this:

a) program workthrough: 2 hrs. (a.m.)
b) daily check point: 15 min. (a.m. or p.m.)
c) lecture period: 40 min. (a.m.)
d) consultation appointment or project report: 5 min. (a.m. or p.m.)
e) test taking (programmed): 20 min. (a.m. or p.m.)
f) project or mini-program work: 25 min.
g) program workthrough: 2 hrs. (p.m.)

Total Time: 5 hrs. 45 min.

The average eager student--of whom we have many--normally tends to put in some 8 to 10 hours of work each day, and may also work on weekends. Of course these students normally finish all their required work early--as much as a week or more so. They may stop if they wish and take a longer vacation between blocks--or continue to work on the subsequent block's materials. On the other hand, the student who either hates language or has no "talent" for it, will also often need to put in some 8 hours daily, and, although he will not finish early, he will finish. Finally, the student, be he "slow", "gifted" or simply absent too long from work, who does not put in the necessary time and therefore does not finish the required portion of the program receives no credit for that particular block. It is not a question so much of failing Spanish as simply one of having failed to do the necessary work.

Certainly, neither the Spanish instructor's schedule nor the student's would be viable without the self-instructional programmed materials that we use. It is precisely the four hours minimum daily drill he receives with these that allows him to learn (i.e. make habit ) most of the Spanish or French that he does in the "first year" course, without the constant intervention of the live instructor. If such drill time and monitoring time were required from the instructor he would have little or no time to give to the individual student--as in actuality

he does spend most of his time. At least for Spanish we know the program seems essential,for we have also taught with a conventional (and very excellent) Spanish classroom text and to simply "get through it" on what might be called a passive basis (i.e. very little student drill on the sending skills) all of the individualized activities of teacher and student, possible within the programmed approach, was perforce omitted.

In the first portion of this report a number of problems or "questions" for language learning were suggested upon which some light could be thrown by our experience in teaching language under the Colorado College Plan. Let me list them again in the light of what has now been said, and then give a brief--in some cases still highly tentative answer--to each. They are as follows:

1. What is the effect of lack of 'normal', "fallow time" on the block plan language student?

2. How many hours a day can a typical, undergraduate be expected to study (efficiently and effectively) a foreign language?

3. How well (usefully) are language habits made and maintained under the contingencies of "intensive" study, and how many can be made (i.e. "coverage")?

4. What are the problems of sequentiality?

5. What competence may be expected as compared with non-block language study?

While the answer to the last question concerning comparative language competence gained might be presumed to contribute to each of the preceding ones, and thus might logically be answered first, I shall none-the-less retain its final position as I suggest answers to the preceding questions, although I shall anticipate a part of its answer by saying now that its comparative nature does not throw as much light on language learning under the block system as one might expect. Turning first, then to the question that seemed to be uppermost in our minds when we began the experiment, what indeed seems to be the effect of lack of fallow time on the block plan language student? Measured in the ways that are available to us, and during the relatively short time we have had, and remembering that we are concerned only with what are traditionally considered the necessary skills to elementary language learning, I must answer that its absence--if indeed it is absent--is in no way detrimental. Of course, we cannot be positive that there is not in fact sufficient time under the block plan schedule for the mind to exercise its own chemistry, or mathematics, or cognitive behavior in digesting, or analyzing or making things fall into place (making habits of thought?) that traditionally aids the student in most learning chores. All we can know for sure is that there has not been as much as is normally the case. Yet this obvious difference in quantity seems itself to explain some of the differences we can already note in our first year students. For example, pronunciation skills for program taught block students are dramatically better in general than those gained by semester taught students. Certainly, a student who spends all his time studying French or Spanish during a block would suffer much less interference from hearing and using English. Reading skills also seem to show significant improvement, in both speed and interest. Again, a rather obvious explanation would be that it is easier to maintain accuracy in vocabulary recall during the intensive block's work: in a word, less time for forgetting during the period that control over vocabulary was needed. At all events, first year Spanish block students are able to read more than twice as much as our first year Spanish semester students in the past. As the combined result of improved pronunciation and reading skills, the students' ability in aural comprehension produces significantly higher class-average grades on the MLA-ETS Cooperative Spanish Proficiency Exam, Level LA, than I have been able to achieve in my past twenty years of teaching Spanish. I report these three items of a comparative nature as examples of many of the happy effects that we had not expected. Of themselves they do not prove a point for, nor against the efficacy of "fallow period". For our real concern was simply whether language learning could proceed effectively for the average student, without the time normally available to let this learning "sink in". And this concern no longer exists.

We can see no detrimental effects in its (presumed) absence. Why are there none? From our experience, from the little we know of somewhat similar undertakings in the Berlitz "total immersion" process, and other intensive language teaching programs, I would generalize as follows: the kinds of habits essential in elementary oral language acquisition are motor responses rather than cognitive ones. The articulatory habits of pronunciation; the discriminatory habits of hearing and comprehension, the morphological habits of verb conjugation, noun-adjective pluralization, etc. the syntactical habits of word order, noun-adjective agreement, etc. do not need fallow time for "jelling" but practice time for automatization. This they have under the block; the fallow time they do not need they do not have, and perhaps beneficially so.

I suspect that we shall find other aspects of language learning that are not influenced by the lack of fallow time as we continue to experiment--and indeed we may discover some that are definitely influenced, either negatively or beneficially, by its absence. But at the moment it seems safe to say that the exclusive and intensive elementary study of a foreign language for a period of three and one half weeks gives good results, some superior to those achieved under less intensive and non-exclusive study. The question regarding the long time maintainance of these habits we will confront later in this report.

Our second worrisome question was how many hours a day could a typical undergraduate be expected to study (efficiently and effectively) a foreign language during a three and one half week academic block? The adjective "typical" as used in this question is important. It suggests, first, a student, probably a Freshman, who has had some language training before but has not scored well enough on the MLA-ETS exam to place out of first year college language study; who is,therefore, not a prospective language major; and who is "taking language" for reasons which are not of great personal interest to him. On the other hand, he is reasonably bright, willing and motivated to do well in all the work he undertakes. The figures we needed to answer our question we now have. We can expect 92 percent of our students to spend at least five hours a day, average, and complete the work of the course. Of this 92% we can also expect 30% to devote as much as eight to ten hours a day. 50% of those who complete the course, the "average student", works usefully some six and one half hours a day, averaged over the seventeen and a half day period. In a word, the average student devotes some 114 hours to language learning during a block in comparison with the 180 hours (minimum) the average 5 days-per-week semester student may be calculated to spend--- and learns, it appears, rather more. I wish I could end this answer here. But I have reported only the statistical side. There is another--that of student attitudes and evaluation. This information we gain from the student questionnaires given at the end of each block. Here the almost unanimous opinion is that they have worked harder and longer than they have for any other course except, perhaps, for one in their major field. And that they resent the amount of time necessary. And, that while they are pleased with the amount of language they have learned, and would recommend the course to any one else who wanted to learn the language, they themselves would under no circumstances undergo the same experience again! It is simply "too much work" to learn a language. College-wide statistics, however, show that the average total hours worked on a weekly basis by the Colorado College block student for the past two years is 24.5; while the average worked by natural science majors is 34 hours weekly, two hours more than our average (time-wise) language student. Two explanations suggest themselves to account for the discrepancy between hours actually worked and student evaluation (in both quality and quantity) of language study hours. First, of course, we know that programmed learning, requiring some thirty to forty active student responses per minute is far more exhausting than other types or means of shaping verbal responses. Often an hour does feel like three, and belief is far more real than fact. It is possible to say that our students respond more than they work in other courses. Another, and in my opinion more relevant, explanation considers the nature of the learning task in elementary language instruction. In one respect the college student is sent back to grade school and asked to again submit to the purely repetitive tasks that he was charged with there. Elementary language learning appears to them to require no more of the cognitive skills than the memorization of the addition and multiplication tables. I agree here, and am most sympathetic with the student's attitude. It would have been much better if they could have learned Spanish at the same time as they did those tables. But they did not and we must leave the matter

there. I am not so pessimistic as to believe that no solution exists to the problem of student attitudes toward the value of time devoted to the formation of linguistic habits. But I see little chance of finding it within the next year or so, either.

The third question asks how well, or how usefully, are the necessary language habits made under the block system, and how many can be made, during one or more block periods. If we attempt to answer this question by simply comparing results of block students with past semester students, as measured by the MLA-ETS LA or MA exams we would have to say, as I have already suggested, that there was significant superiority for block students in several areas. The number of habits, again that is to say, the coverage of material, however, does at first glance show a most significant difference. In French and Spanish instruction we have as yet not found it possible, or at least feasible, to "cover" (that is to say, usefully expose the student to") as much material in four blocks as we once did in four semesters. In German, however, such an attempt is (successfully, I understand) being made. It is quite possible that the greater attention given to the purely oral-aural skills in French and Spanish make it difficult for us to do. At all events we have found it useful to require an additional block of language work during the traditional "first year" language curriculum, which means that we use the equivalent of three semesters to teach what presumably we used to teach in two. Could this additional time account for the superiority we seem to find in our block system language students? It is possible, but in my opinion not probable. There is, in effect, "no additional time" when compared to the semester system. During his "first year" language work our average block student, working for three semesters, invests a total of 342 hours, according to the fairly accurate average we have been able to calculate. The semester based student, however, in two semesters has invested a minimum average of 360 hours. Rather than the "extra block" of time, I believe it is the intensity of the work done in it and the kind of work that the block makes possible. As we shall begin to examine with the last two questions.

Our fourth question asks what are the problems of sequentiality? What happens to a student who may spread his five blocks total of language learning over the period of four years? Of course, we recommend that he not do this, but rather follow the traditional method of completing all elementary and secondary foreign language work during his first two academic years in college. Most of our students do this, but some look as if they were going to follow the extreme method I have just mentioned. (We await their presence year after next with much interest.) The normal and recommended progression is as follows: The first two blocks of language (the first semester) is taken without interruption. After these two contiguous blocks, we recommend the student study something else for one or two blocks; returning then to take his third block (second semester) and ideally, after another one or two blocks intermission, return again, still during the same school year, to take his fourth (or third semester) block. His fifth and last elementary language block would best come during the following year after he had (again ideally) had the opportunity to study in Mexico either during the summer or in one of the other courses offered by the college which could usefully take place there (e.g. history, anthropology, social sciences, etc.). There is yet one more possibility of sequencing: to take all five blocks within the same academic year or, for that matter, within a single semester. This has in fact been done, successfully, by one student already . . . although the strain manifested by him during the last two blocks, one of which was spent in Mexico, suggested that such a sequence is justifiable only when absolutely necessary.

I have not, as you may have noticed, yet answered the question--what <u>are</u> the problems encountered by the student in letting, in this case, <u>too much fallow time</u> intervene between intensive exposures to language learning? The problem is, of course, forgetting or, behaviorally put, extinction of new behaviors. But, it does not happen to the degree that we have feared, and we are very grateful. We have also taken steps to prevent it from happening at all if the individual student is cooperative. All languages have provided what we call adjunct courses to maintain language abilities learned during previous blocks, conducted along the lines of conversation classes, which meet once or twice a week in the late afternoons or evenings. For some languages, like Spanish, there are also self-instructional programs that the student may work at in the lab for a half hour daily and maintain previously learned skills while adding others. For the adjunct conversational

and review classes and for the programmed work the student receives credit. There are also, of course, the language houses and language tables which provide the opportunity for maintenance but without credit. It is not surprising that students who make an effort to maintain what they have learned do indeed maintain it. But that the student who makes no effort does also to a large degree (I would say roughly no less than 75 %) maintain his skills over non-supportive periods of as many as five or six blocks (we have no cases yet of greater time without formal adjunct work), is as I said, most rewarding to us. And it is the reason I can give to explain this unlikely result that, at least for me, represents one of the major victories of the block system for language instruction. For, the system has forced us, primarily for reasons of sequentiality, to re-examine not only how but what we were going to teach in each block. And we guessed that if we could teach one thing well, it would stand a greater chance of being remembered, than if we taught several things less well. The consequences of this decision are many and varied. A good example of them is, however, the decision taken in regard to selection of grammatical material to be taught in each block. In the first two blocks of elementary Spanish, for example, the student learns all of the basic structures of Spanish that can be used while speaking in the present. This, of course, includes many structures which can allude to both the present and the past, or future. But it is only the morphology of the Spanish verb in the present tense (both indicative and subjunctive) that is taught. Translate this into the semester system: if two semesters were spent only on the present forms and uses of the present tense in Spanish would not they be better learned? Under the block system they are, apparently, for they are remembered after several blocks of non-necessity for recall. In the third block, our Spanish student has the opportunity of reviewing the basic structures learned in the first two blocks while habitualizing the verb forms for past and future as his sole learning task. Again, he learns well enough to absent himself for substantial time from exposure to the language, without risk of losing more than one third of what he has been able to learn. To my knowledge it is the first time that the content of a language course has been influenced by the calendar on which it would be taught and has resulted in a useful approach to the sequencing of material to be learned that may be equally useful outside the block.

What, finally, are the overall results, what competence may be expected as compared with non-block language study? With reference to the degree of competence gained as measured by the MLA-ETS Cooperative test scores, there seem to be dramatic gains in all oral skills, both speaking and oral comprehension, significant gain in the reading skills and no gain, nor loss, in the writing skills. Translating this into class-average percentiles of the 92% who complete and therefore pass the individual block courses in Spanish, measured at the end of the first three blocks and again at the end of the fifth block, MA form, they are as follows: Speaking , 95; Listening, 92; Reading, 89; Writing, 67. These averages are those of both exam levels. The MA scores individually are significantly higher on the writing section, since most written work is done after the third language block.

These differences, in favor of the block student, are most encouraging to us. There are, however, other differences which may, in the end, be far more important. The potential for individualized instruction under the block system, to give the positive results that only it, both theoretically and practically, can give is certainly one of them. This was, of course, one of the principal goals of the block-system. The results in languages (I speak only for Spanish here) are easily measured in a purely quantititive way: We are producing more students, more quickly, who can achieve a level of competence in one school year to be able to major in Spanish--and we are finding more of these who actually do want to major. Also, major or not, an interest in things Spanish seems to be heightened by the block experience, for more and more students who finish their language requirements continue to enroll in upper division classes--and take interest in the Junior year abroad programs we maintain in France, Spain and Peru. I suppose all of this might have been predicted. Language, the most human of man's skills , is learned best on an individualized basis. The Colorado College block plan not only allows such individualization but makes it inevitable. The things our students are learning and the depth with which they are learning in classes we still call "first year Spanish" and "first year French" are as different from the past as are the methods and means we are using to help them learn.

And the learning seems at this early point to be superior in several ways, in language studies, to that one has been able to achieve on the semester system. This fact, demonstrated at The Colorado College, suggests a conclusion that all of us interested in improving language instruction might well consider. Most simply it is this: schedules, or calendars, for learning different things may themselves well be differeng. These differences, effectively exploited, may require other changes in both content of that learned, and methods of learning. We are at a point in time when changes in the educational process can be made more easily and more quickly than ever before in our history. I believe we should continue to makd them--in calendar, content and method--for the benefit of our language students.

F. Rand Morton
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Dept. Romance Languages
The Colorado College
Colorado Springs, Colorado